

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 NEAE-00 USIE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

CCO-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 T-03 OMB-01

MC-02 AID-20 IGA-02 RSR-01 TRSE-00 EA-11 /130 W

----- 062029

O R 151435 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3189

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: MASS, PFOR, IN, PK, US

SUBJ: ARMS TO PAKISTAN-- FOREIGN MINISTER IN PARLIAMENT.

SUMMARY: FONMIN SWARAN SINGH INFORMED LOK SABHA (LOWER HOUSE) MARCH 15 OF US DECISION " RESUME ARMS SUPPLIES TO PAKISTAN," REITERATING INDIAN " GRAVE CONCERN" AND NOTING " NEGATIVE EFFECT" ON INDO- US AND SUBCONTINENTAL RELATIONS. OPPOSITION AND ONE CONGRESS MEMBER PRESSED FOR CONDEMNATION, BUT FONMIN RESISTED. WHILE NOTING THAT OF ITEMS INCLUDED OCTOBER 1970 ONE- TIME- EXCEPTION, US ONLY SUPPLYING ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS, HE ADMITTED UNDER QUESTIONING HE COULD NOT GUARANTEE US POLICY IN FUTURE. HE DODGED QUESTION WHETHER GOI WOULD GO AHEAD WITH PEACE INDIGO. END SUMMARY.

1. FONMIN' S STATEMENT: SWARAN SINGH RESPONDED TO CALLING ATTENTION NOTICE WITH FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

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" IT WAS OFFICIALLLY ANNOUNCED IN WASHINGTON YESTERDAY BY THE STATE DEPT. THAT WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT THE UNITED STATES IS LIFTING THE EMBARGO ON THE SUPPLY OF ARMS TO PAKISTAN. AS A RESULT, PAKISTAN WILL IMMEDIATELY RECEIVE 300 ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS REPORTEDLY VALUED AT \$13 MILLION, AND AIRCRAFT ENGINES, MILITARY SPARE PARTS AND PARACHUTES VALUED AT \$1.1 MILLION ACCORDING TO US STATEMENT. IT IS CLEAR FROM THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WILL PERMIT PAKISTAN TO ACQUIRE NON- LETHAL MILITARY EQUIPMENT AS WELL AS SPARE PARTS FOR LETHAL WEAPONS GIVEN TO PAKISTAN EARLIER BY THE UNITED STATES.

" I HAD REITERATED OUR GRAVE CONCERN YESTERDAY OVER THE AMERICAN SUPPLY OF ARMS TO PAKISTAN AND HAD EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WOULD CAREFULLY CONSIDER THE IMPLICATIONS OF SUCH ARMS SUPPLIES AND REFRAIN FROM THIS ACTION. THE FOREIGN SECRETARY ALSO CONVEYED OUR STRONG FEELINGS ON THE SUBJECT TO THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR IN NEW DELHI YESTERDAY, AS THIS WOULD HAVE A NEGATIVE EFFECT ON INDO- AMERICAN RELATIONS AND ON THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION ON THE SUBCONTINENT. OUR AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON IS ALSO TAKING UP THE MATTER IMMEDIATELY WITH THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO CONVEY OUR GRAVE CONCERN ON THEIR DECISION."

2. QUESTIONS: PRO- MOSCOW COMMUNIST PARTY LEADER INDERJIT GUPTA LED ATTACK ON WHAT HE TERMED " COMPLACENT" REPLY BY FONMIN AND DEMANDED CONDEMNATION OF US DECISION BY HOUSE AND/ OR GOVERNMENT. CONGRESS YOUTH LEADER PRIYA RAJAN DEE MUNSHI CONCURRED IN NEED FOR STRONGER STATEMENT, AS DID SWATANTRA MEMBER

P. K. DEO. PARTICIPATION LIMITED TO FIVE MEMBERS WHO SUBMITTED NOTICE. DEBATE SHARP BUT NOT STORMY.

3. FONMIN REACTION: WHILE NOT REPEATING ADVICE OF PREVIOUS DAY TO MEMBERS NOT TO GET EXCITED, FONMIN AVOIDED BEING DRAWN INTO MAKING CONDEMNATION. HE REJECTED, HOWEVER, SOCIALIST MEMBER' S SUGGESTION THIS ACCRETION TO PAK STRENGTH SHOULD NOT WORRY AN INDIA WHICH WOULD ALWAYS BE STRONGER. US ACTION WOULD POSE " SERIOUS PROBLEM" FOR INDIAN SECURITY AND ALSO HAVE POLITICAL EFFECT ON SITUATION ON SUBCONTINENT, SWARAN SINGH SAID. FONMIN REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES US ACTION WOULD COME IN WAY OF NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH US. " MERE WORDS OF FRIENDSHIP" FROM US NOT AS IMPORTANT AS ACTIONS.

4. REST OF ONE- TIME- EXCEPTION: FONMIN SOUGHT TO CLARIFY EXTENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF US DECISION, NOTING INTER ALIA THAT NO TANKS OR AIRCRAFT INCLUDED.
IN RESPONSE SPECIFIC QUESTION, HE SAID INDIA UNDERSTOOD USG
WOULD NOT SUPPLY ITEMS IN ONE- TIME- EXCEPTION OTHER THAN 300
APC' S. HECKLED, HE ADDED THAT IN PAST USG HAD
" PREVARICATED" ON ITS PROMISES.

5. SUPPLIES THROUGH THIRD COUNTRIES: WITH HIS QUESTIONERS
AGAIN EXPRESSING CONCERN ABOUT US ARMS REACHING PAKISTAN
THROUGH IRAN, FONMIN NOTED US POSITION THAT ITS PERMISSION
REQUIRED FOR TRANSFERS BUT ADDED THAT SOMETIMES ARMS TRANSFERRED
WITHOUT PERMISSION AND THAT USG COULD ALWAYS GIVE PERMISSION.
INDIA THEREFORE HAD TO FACE POSSIBILITY SOME ARMS MIGHT GO
FROM IRAN TO PAKISTAN.

6. PEACE INDIGO: FONMIN INSISTED ANY EASING IN FAVOR INDIA
DID NOT AFFECT INDIAN OBJECTION TO CHANGE IN FAVOR PAKISTAN.
ASKED IF GOI WOULD CONSIDER GOING AHEAD WITH PEACE INDIGO
(IN INDIGNANT TONE), FONMIN POINTED OUT SPECIFIC ARMS PURCHASES
NOT DISCUSSED ON FLOOR OF HOUSE.

7. MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER: FACED WITH SUGGESTION PM
SHOULD NOT SEE AMBASSADOR LATER IN DAY, FONMIN SAID HE SURE
SHE WOULD DO GOOD JOB OF PRESENTING GOI POSITION. (PM PRESENT
FOR FIRST PART OF DEBATE BUT HAD LEFT BY THEN.)

DECON UPON RECEIPT. MOYNIHAN

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 MAR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973NEWDE03011
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: n/a
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730330/aaaahxbr.tel
Line Count: 146
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 DEC 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17-Dec-2001 by shawdg>; APPROVED <07-Jan-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> srp 971210
Subject: ARMS TO PAKISTAN-- FOREIGN MINISTER IN PARLIAMENT.
TAGS: MASS, PFOR, IN, PK, US
To: NEA
SECSTATE WASHDC INFO BOMBAY
CALCUTTA
DACCA
MULTIPLE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

